GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:138
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2003
PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY;SHYAMA SINGH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of dismal state of affairs prevailing in the public health care system in the country, the National Human Rights Commission has stressed the need to fix the emergency medical care;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto;

(c) whether the Union Government proposes to discuss the matter with the State Governments and implement the public health care system in the country in an effective way; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a)to(d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 138 FOR 10.12.2003

In the aftermath of the Uphaar tragedy, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) set up a Core Group headed by late Dr.V. Ramalingaswamy to suggest ways and means for improving the state of Emergency Medical Care in the country.

The Core Group was of the view that an efficient health care system must provide holistic protection for medical emergencies by combining preventive and early warning services. The other suggestions included, inter-alia, appropriately equipping casualty departments, training in emergency response to health and para-medical staff, establishment of a clearly defined referral system and provision for network of laboratory support services. The Group also recommended involving private tertiary care institutions in this regard.

The Government of India, while agreeing with the conceptual paper prepared by the Core Group, responded as follows:-

(i) To implement this, there is a requirement for involvement of State Governments and Local Bodies for which the State Governments have to be consulted.

(ii) Continued Medical Education (CME) programme on emergency response should be imparted to Medical and Para-medical staff.

(iii) There is a need for Capacity Building in terms of development of manpower and other infrastructure to handle the disaster of any nature (Flood, Cyclone, Earthquake and Fire etc.).

(iv) There should be identified personnel including the well-defined linkage for coordination of disaster management in each of the District and State level.

(v) Identification of strategic tertiary care, secondary care of hospitals should be made in each part of the country.

After consultations, NHRC, has constituted a Group of Experts to study the existing system for emergency medical care and to make recommendations for improvement wherever necessary. In this Expert Group, a nominee from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is also a member.

The NHRC has decided to co-jointly organize a National Consultation on strengthening Primary Health Care in 2004 by NHRC and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, with a focus on emergency medical care and also to involve various State Governments in this process.